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*President:* Mr. Han Seung-soo ..... (Republic of Korea)

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Botnaru (Republic of Moldova), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

**Agenda item 49** (*continued*)

**Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters**

**Mr. Niculescu** (Romania): Mr. Vice-President, it is a pleasure to see you presiding over this meeting. I would like to start my intervention by paying tribute to the contribution to this reform debate made by the former President of the General Assembly, Mr. Harri Holkeri, and his two Vice-Chairmen in the Working Group, Ambassadors de Saram and Ingólffson. Mr. Holkeri's proposals on Security Council reform, put forward in his statement at the concluding meeting of the previous session of General Assembly, remain important guidelines for our future activities. At the same time, allow me to thank President Han, through you, for calling this timely debate on agenda item 49 and to assure him that we are looking forward to supporting him and both Vice-Chairmen during the coming year.

The dramatic events of 11 September and the prompt answer that the international community is giving to them demonstrate once again the crucial role played by the United Nations in general, and by the Security Council in particular, in the fight against terrorism, the most dangerous threat nowadays to global peace and stability. The immediate adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and the establishment of the Security Council Committee on Counter-Terrorism speak for themselves.

Nevertheless, the recent vivid, and mostly critical, debate in this Assembly on the Security Council's annual report clearly shows that the reform of that principal body of the Organization is more necessary than ever, and that the time has come to take quick and concrete steps in this matter. We should leave behind time-consuming debates over nuances in language, and instead move forward by seriously analysing the existing models of an expanded and more effective Council. With due respect to the committed activities of our Group and to the importance of the more general debates on this issue which are taking place in both the General Assembly and the Security Council, we realize that bringing the debates up to the level of the political leadership of our countries — at least, on the most controversial issues — might be the only productive way to overcome the current difficulties.

Romania, like a significant majority of Member States, supports the enlargement of the Security Council in both categories of membership, in order to reflect changed global realities. We share the view that such an increase should strike a balance between enhancing the opportunities for participation and increasing the efficiency of the Council. Our choice is for an additional five permanent seats, for both

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developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the most industrialized countries, like Germany and Japan.

As regards the rotating category, we continue to favour the addition of new seats for countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe, thus making it possible to have an enlarged Council of some 24 members. Irrespective of the final formula, we stress the importance for the Eastern European Group to get an additional non-permanent seat. We see the establishment of rotating permanent seats as an option to be examined by each specific regional group, even if we are not very much in favour of adding new categories of membership. On the other hand, some changes in the current shape of the regional groups might be considered, especially if future reform of the Security Council is to be linked with specific regional arrangements.

With regard to the veto, which remains the most sensitive issue, we have no problem with its use by future permanent members. We are aware of some concerns expressed by various Member States and the ideas they put forward, ranging from total abolition of the veto to a restriction of its scope and application to no change whatsoever. From our viewpoint, the veto remains an essential tool to ensure that the Security Council can preserve international peace and security.

Romania considers periodic reviews of the structure and functioning of the Security Council as an important part of our reform exercise. We consider that 15 years would be a reasonable timeframe to assess the performance of the reform package.

To conclude, let me express our conviction that at the current international juncture, it has become imperative to focus on what we have in common, trying at the same time to break through those issues where divergences still exist. The Romanian delegation will spare no effort, alongside other delegations, to be useful and to assist the President and the distinguished Vice-Chairmen in this important endeavour.

**Mr. Gauto Vielman** (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Last year, at the Millennium Summit, the heads of State issued an appeal for us to redouble our efforts to introduce broad reforms into the Security Council in all its aspects. The need for reforming the Council is becoming ever more evident today, when the world is confronting new threats to international peace and security. Recent events have given us notice that the world has changed and that new realities and new challenges have arisen. Consequently, if we want the Organization to strengthen its operational capacity as an instrument for the preservation and strengthening of international peace, we must do everything in our power to adapt to the changes and challenges imposed upon us by the new global reality and to take the necessary decisions to this end.

The Security Council, established by the Charter as the organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, is today facing the imperative need to bring its composition and structure into line with the demands of the new global reality. Any delay in taking a decision would only serve to create further doubt about the true intentions with regard to reforming the Council.

The best example of the new reality faced by our Organization is the recently adopted Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), which makes it clear that the Council will have to expand its sphere of action, thereby making clear the imperative need for reform. More than ever before, we need close interaction between the Council and the entire membership of the Organization. The effective implementation of resolution 1373 (2001) requires the will and cooperation of all Member States. For this we need a representative, equitable and transparent Council.

On this subject, allow me to repeat in this plenary the principal elements underlying the position of the Republic of Paraguay.

First, we believe that the reform of the Security Council should be comprehensive so that its composition becomes more equitable, representative and transparent in order to make a better political balance possible.

Secondly, we support the increase in both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent, and including developed and developing countries, particularly taking into account that developing countries are currently under-represented, even though their role in international affairs has increase considerably.

Thirdly, reform should include an improvement in the working methods of the Security Council. Greater transparency and participation by the rest of the membership of the United Nations are essential elements of reform.

Fourthly, reform should include the gradual elimination of the right of veto on the part of the permanent members.

Eight years have gone by since the creation of the Working Group to study concrete measures to improve the structure and functioning of the Security Council. The extent and content of this debate clearly reflect the extreme complexity of the subject and the need for reform. Nevertheless, these very considerations compel us to show evidence of some progress in our deliberations, preferably on specific measures based on consensus, and to prevent our discussion from being bogged down in routine repetition.

The delegation of Paraguay is determined to continue working within the framework of the Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly, since we believe that it is the appropriate forum in which to address the question in a broad and participatory approach. We are ready to cooperate with and support the efforts of its officers so that, next year, when this important subject arises again in the General Assembly, we will be able to change the tone of our statements and to applaud the progress achieved.

In conclusion, we reaffirm that recent events have revealed the need for and importance of the Security Council. We therefore cannot go on postponing a political decision on this subject indefinitely, since we must comply with the mandate laid down by our heads of State and Government when they adopted the Millennium Declaration.

**Mr. Aldouri** (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Open-ended Working Group for its efforts in preparing the report under consideration. In our opinion, the report reflects the experience of the international community in one of the main organs of the United Nations, the Security Council.

All States are calling for the reform of the Security Council in terms of its composition, rules of procedure, decision-making process and power of veto. A great deal has been said in this regard, but Iraq's experience with the Council, despite its bitterness, remains a very rich one by dint of its unique character. It is testimony to a major imbalance in the nature of the Council's work and represents a deviation from the provisions of the Charter that clearly stipulate the parameters within which the Council discharges its legal authority and mandate.

Over the past 10 years, the Security Council has dealt with Iraq neither on the basis of the Charter nor in the interests of the maintenance of international peace and security, but rather on behalf of the narrow interests of one State that dominates the Council's work. This has been done without regard to the legal or humanitarian principles on which the Charter is based.

The relationship between Iraq and the Council is a manifestation of another egregious imbalance in the Council's work. The Council's resolutions remain open-ended and have indefinite objectives. The reformulation of these resolutions has become a matter of course whenever one or two States feel that the Council must fulfil its obligations to Iraq once we have fully honoured our commitments. In these instances, the Council adopts resolutions that have absolutely no relation to the main issue on which they were originally adopted. Furthermore, these new resolutions are diametrically opposed to the purposes and principles of the Charter and the rules of international law. This testifies to the need to establish machinery to assess the legitimacy of the Security Council's resolutions.

Iraq therefore reserves the right to hold the Council accountable for any resolution it suspects either of non-compliance with the spirit and the letter of the Charter or of circumventing the Council's responsibilities in other cases, such as those of Palestine and Afghanistan. Such accountability should be to the General Assembly or the International Court of Justice, depending on the nature of the action taken.

The relationship between the Security Council and Iraq represents, in reality, nothing more than a relationship between Iraq and two permanent members of the Council — indeed, perhaps only one permanent member. The Council has thus violated an important principle of the Charter, which requires it to act on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations, not of one State Member. The Council does not act on the basis of the wishes of certain actors that dominate its decision-making process in accordance with their own political and economic interests. We feel that it is wrong for the Council to be so selective. Its selectivity is evident not only in its relationship with Iraq, but also in its dealings with Palestine, and is manifest in the Council's scandalously passive positions vis-à-vis the Zionist crimes that have been perpetrated against the Palestinian people for more than 50 years.

Regrettably, the Council has sought to make its relationship with Iraq a model and precedent to frighten other States. This was to be achieved through the adoption of measures whose political essence was concealed under a facade of legality, although they were actually at great variance with the legal bases of the United Nations Charter and international law. In this respect, the Security Council has not heeded international law, and that in turn has had a negative impact on the humanitarian situation in Iraq. That in itself constitutes a violation of human rights — rights which the international community is supposed to uphold.

Is it not strange that the Council has made itself both judge and prosecutor? It must be the judge, not the prosecutor. The continuation of such a situation is creating a major imbalance; it represents a violation of the values enshrined in the Charter, and the matter must be dealt with in a radical manner.

The story of the Security Council's relations with Iraq deserves hard scrutiny. It is reflected in a number of grave injustices imposed by the Council — or, rather, by just two members of the Council acting in the name of the United Nations — on Iraq. The question of Iraq is considered in the Security Council behind closed doors, not only during informal consultations and meetings in caucus rooms, but also in capitals. The objective is to prevent Iraq from attending any discussions or meetings and thereby to exclude it from considering any draft resolutions relating to it that might be adopted.

Such practices are not confined to the Council proper, but extend also to its subsidiary organs. That situation applies to the well-known Committee established pursuant to resolution 661 (1990), which considers matters of grave importance for Iraq — matters affecting the life and the economy of the entire Iraqi people: humanitarian civilian needs, including food, medicine, electricity, water and transport. However, consideration of all these matters takes place without any transparency. The representative of Iraq must wait outside with journalists and others if he wants to obtain some information about those meetings. As I said, such meetings affect the daily lives of Iraqi citizens, yet the representative of Iraq is not allowed to enter the room or to participate, or even to know what decisions are being taken by the Committee, although those decisions relate to foodstuffs and medicines that have an impact on the daily lives of the Iraqi people.

It is only reasonable and logical that States such as Iraq should play a major role in the discussions of the Council and of Committees when such discussions affect the life of an entire people. Where is transparency? Transparency exists among only some members of the Council, not all. The non-permanent members and some of the permanent members do not participate in those discussions. That is a very serious matter. Where is the transparency in the work of the Security Council?

Do not such practices fly in the face of the mission of the United Nations? I would like to provide a clear example of this. A few days ago, when the Security Council discussed the matter of the embargo in general, it listened to the views of representatives of States that have no relevance to the embargo itself, except from a technical and financial point of view: Switzerland, which I do not believe has faced an embargo or blockade, and Germany, which I do not believe has been the victim of an embargo recently. Those two States were involved in the discussions because they had held certain workshops on the matter — also behind closed doors and within high walls. Participants in those workshops were invited on a selective basis; nobody considered inviting Iraq, which has been under embargo for 10 years. They did not even think about the benefits of such an experience for us.

During those discussions in the Council, Iraq was not invited to participate, and for one reason only: it is the only country in the world that has suffered the most, throughout its history, from such embargoes, and it is best able to share its bitter experience with the Council so that the whole world hears and benefits from it. In that way, the whole world would not repeat the mistake that it made when it adopted its criminal resolutions against the people of Iraq. I would like to stress that such resolutions are criminal. I repeat: invitations were not extended.

Articles 31 and 32 of the Charter stipulate that the countries affected by conflict should participate in deliberations of the Council and that their viewpoints must be heard. Yet Iraq is never present at the meetings of the Council and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 661 (1990), which takes decisions affecting the daily life of the Iraqi people.

I apologize for speaking at such length, but I must say that the credibility of the Security Council has been lost and that its legitimacy is being put to the test. There are many questions that cannot be resolved without a radical reform process. The dictatorship of the unipolar system has created double standards, selectivity and a lack of transparency; the peripheral informal meetings of the Council are an incurable disease. The weakness of the Council — its inability to adopt resolutions to deal with severe and difficult crises, its failure to implement Article 24 of the Charter and its interpretation of Chapter VII in an unprecedented and selective manner — all oblige the Assembly to live up to its historic responsibilities.

In this difficult situation, the Assembly must take action under resolution 377 (V), entitled "Uniting for peace". Otherwise, we will face more Palestines and more Afghanistans, and international security, which has already collapsed, will be completely destroyed.

How can the Security Council turn a blind eye to the grave crimes that are being perpetrated in its name — let alone give its blessing to them? More than 1.5 million Iraqis have been killed with the blessing of the Security Council. The entire Iraqi infrastructure has been completely destroyed right under the Council's nose. And following the usurpation of their land under Council resolutions, the Palestinians are being killed.

And now, a people with absolutely no possessions to their name — the people of Afghanistan — are being destroyed before the very eyes of the United Nations. They are the victims of brutal aggression, which is claiming thousands of lives. And the Security Council remains silent.

Iraq's position on reform of the Security Council can be summarized as follows. First, the veto should be restricted as a prelude to its abolition as a symbol of discrimination among States and as a violation of the Charter principle of sovereign equality. Second, rules of procedure must be adopted to ensure transparency and justice and to guarantee the Charter rights of States. Third, Council membership must be increased in a way that will ensure the democratic representation of the international community. Fourth, permanent membership should be abolished; this would ensure genuinely equal rights and duties for all Council members. Fifth, the Council, as an executive political body, should refrain from adopting resolutions of a legislative nature; interpretation of the provisions of the Charter and of Council resolutions should be the province of the International Court of Justice. Sixth, measures must be adopted to ensure the Council's accountability to the General Assembly. Seventh, the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice must encompass supervision of Security Council resolutions, either automatically or on the request of Member States. Eighth, the use of the Council as a tool for carrying out the foreign policy of a certain State must stop, and the collective international responsibility of the Council, as a United Nations organ, must be reaffirmed. Ninth, non-members of the Council, in particular the States directly concerned, must be kept informed about Council deliberations on resolutions with a bearing on international peace and security; for the sake of transparency, Council meetings must be open to all States without exception; informal meetings should be kept to a minimum, except for technical reasons. Tenth, the Council must adopt principles of preventive diplomacy, recourse to Chapter VI of the Charter and the use of all peaceful means to settle conflict between States; the use of Chapter VII to impoverish peoples or to attack States must be prohibited. And finally, Council members should abstain in the voting on draft resolutions pertaining to conflicts to which they are parties.

**Mr. Hussein** (Ethiopia): Under the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council bears primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. That very mandate also requires the Security Council to be truly international, in terms of not only its mandate but also its representation. The problems of international peace and security facing us today call for a more representative Security Council that reflects the existing realities — not those of the last century, but those of today. The understanding reached at the Millennium Summit on intensifying efforts to achieve comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects — structural and procedural reform — should be taken more seriously. Only then can early comprehensive reform of the Council be realized.

Moreover, the Council should not be feudal in nature and undemocratic in character in an Organization some of whose leading Members call for a transparent and democratic world order. The general understanding among States Members of the Organization is that the Council should be reformed and enlarged to make it more representative, credible

and legitimate. Hence, that reform must be concretized and put in place. We long for a Council that truly represents and hears us, not a Council that dictates. We believe that the Council as it stands now lacks the necessary moral high ground it is expected to have.

The decision-making process within the Council also needs to be more transparent. The lack of transparency and accountability in the Council has a lot to do with the issue of addressing the ongoing question of representation and procedural reform. As I said earlier, the Council must become truly representative of the general membership of the Organization, on the basis of the principle of equitable geographic distribution, taking into particular account the urgent needs of the developing world.

Ethiopia fully endorses the positions of the Organization of African Unity and the Non-Aligned Movement on this issue. As the new Chairman of the African working group on the reform of the Security Council, we believe that Africa should have a permanent rotating seat. By this I mean permanent for Africa as a whole, but rotational among States, with the same privileges enjoyed by the permanent members.

Proportional representation by non-permanent members from Africa, since the continent accounts for more than one quarter of the Organization's membership, also needs due consideration in any debate on or formulation of the reform issue. Moreover, since most of the problems being dealt with by the Council now — and many for some time to come — are related primarily to the African continent, Africa's representation in the Council would undoubtedly strengthen the Council's capacity to respond to and resolve effectively and appropriately the daunting challenges ahead of it.

The final formula to be drawn up on the issue should take into account and adequately reflect these legitimate and genuine concerns of our continent. I said earlier that it does not mirror the reality of today but rather that of the last century. The last time this was put in place, some countries, because of their military position and economic contribution and muscle, were given — or took — the permanent seats. Today the reality is different. There are many others on the outside who have more economic muscle than one or two of those who hold permanent seats. There are also those who may be military equals. There are also powers that have nuclear weapons. Are these factors going to be the criteria?

Some of the aforementioned factors were used in the past. In our view, this should not have been done. But we hope that the continuing debate on this issue will be not only fruitful, but also short, for the sake of our Organization and for those peoples around the world whom we represent.

**Mr. Alcalay** (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by acknowledging the important efforts and the contribution of the Open-ended Working Group led at the last session by Mr. Harri Holkeri, who made a distinguished contribution to the subject we are discussing today.

This subject, reform of the Security Council, has once again roused interest on the part of a very large number of delegations. We have listened to them with attention and interest over the last three days, and we agree with the majority that there is a sense of frustration at the small progress on this crucial and fundamental issue.

The Millennium Summit last year presented an opportunity for our heads of State and Government to express their decision to redouble their efforts to bring about broad reform in the Security Council in all its aspects. This was reflected in the Millennium Declaration.

One of the aspects is the question of the veto. We have repeatedly advocated making the Security Council more transparent, more democratic and more representative, because at the present time we do not have a body that possesses these attributes. We consider that the veto — which had a raison d'être historically but now is simply an anti-democratic practice — permits one country to oppose the majority of the others when its views are different from the majority opinion.

We support the elimination of the use of the veto, in accordance with the exercise of the principle of the sovereign equality of States, as stated by the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Hugo Chávez Frías, in this very Hall last year, when he issued an urgent appeal to the international community for the democratization of the United Nations. He clearly proposed the elimination of the veto, which earned him a strong ovation and the gratitude of General Assembly members. This shows our agreement on this subject.

We think that the question of the veto is of vital importance. Nevertheless, we consider that the process of Security Council reform should take place within a comprehensive framework. It should take into account — apart from this crucial point — the expansion of the Council and improvements in its working methods.

These are three aspects that should be dealt with from a comprehensive perspective. The search for this comprehensive solution should be guided by the principle of the sovereign equality of States and the right of member States to irrevocable representation in the organs of limited membership, as in the case of the Security Council.

We appreciate the efforts made by the Open-ended Working Group since its establishment in 1993. We believe that it should continue to be the appropriate forum for seeking the necessary formulas for bringing about general agreement to promote greater transparency and efficiency in the Security Council.

My country is involved in a process of change aimed at bringing about effective democratic participation in its political system. Therefore, we firmly believe that it is necessary to transform the most important political organ of the United Nations, created within the context of the cold war, to guarantee peace and security in the world.

The realities are different today. This organ of the United Nations needs to adapt itself to the signs of the time. It must be oriented to the new international relations in order to become truly democratic, transparent, impartial and accountable to the whole international community. The commitment of all Member States in the face of this challenge cannot be avoided for much longer. We must highlight the fact that an important result has been achieved in the Working Group, and that is the general consensus that has arisen around this reform process. It is a task that cannot be postponed.

What is at stake in this process is the legitimacy and authority of one of the principal organs of our world Organization. It is not for lack of consensus that this process has not been fruitful. At the heart of the matter, what is lacking is political will. Therefore, we must join in our efforts in a constructive spirit, with flexibility, to promote an arrangement that would embrace all of the aspects involved in a comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

My delegation will continue to lend its vigorous support to ensure that the work of the Open-ended Working Group achieves its objective of reforming the Security Council and thereby stripping it of its current character as a repository of the interests of just a few nations.

Today's realities demonstrate once again that major global challenges require major efforts, broad-based commitments and deep solidarity. These realities make it necessary for institutions to measure up to the demands made upon them to respond effectively and appropriately, in an open-minded manner, to the challenges posed by the international system, in order to benefit all peoples equally, without discrimination of any kind.

We need a Security Council that acts in accordance with internationally agreed norms — a Security Council that has reassumed its proper role as guarantor of international peace and security. This challenge has now become an imperative for the good governance of this Organization and for the destiny of succeeding generations.

**Ms. Jarbussynova** (Kazakhstan): At the outset, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the former President of the General Assembly, Mr. Harri Holkeri, for his fruitful work as the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group on Security Council reform. We deeply appreciate his tireless efforts in dealing with this important subject, which has engaged the United Nations system for a number of years. We acknowledge that the Working Group has made some progress and has had an effect on the working methods of the Security Council.

We believe that Mr. Han will continue the process in the same manner and that the Working Group will be able to achieve more tangible results in the next round of consultations. We should fulfil the task entrusted to us by our leaders and intensify our efforts in order to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. To sustain the impetus of the Millennium Summit, we should move forward from discussions into negotiations by focusing on elements of the reform package where agreement is possible.

Through our discussions in the framework of the Working Group, it has become clear that the great majority of Member States support the expansion of both the permanent and non-permanent membership of the Council. Kazakhstan reaffirms its support for the

enlargement of the Security Council in both categories. The ultimate objective of the expansion is to make the Council more representative, on the basis of the principles of equitable geographical representation and of respect for the sovereign equality of all States Members of the United Nations.

My country is in favour of increasing the number of permanent members of the Security Council through the inclusion in its membership of three developing countries from the Asian, African and Latin American and Caribbean regions, as well as two industrialized countries, with a view to ensuring a balance of interests and an adequate reflection of existing geopolitical realities. We have long placed on record our support for Germany and Japan, taking into consideration their significant role in the multifaceted activities of the United Nations, as well as their substantial contribution to the United Nations budget.

With regard to the expansion of the category of non-permanent members of the Council, we advocate observance of the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in accordance with the criteria set forth in Article 23 of the United Nations Charter. We believe that the size of an enlarged Security Council must be limited to a number that would enable the Council to maintain its decision-making effectiveness and to promote greater transparency.

One of the most essential and sensitive elements of Security Council reform is the question of the veto. In our view, the veto has to be applicable to the new permanent members of the Council so as to avoid the creation of intermediate categories of membership in the Security Council. This question has to be dealt with in the context of complex measures aimed at reforming the Council.

At the same time, as we have already noted more than once, an extremely balanced approach needs to be taken with respect to this issue as part of a complex series of measures to reform the Council. We believe that any new permanent members should have equal rights with the permanent five members as regards the use of the veto.

Many delegations have stressed the need to restrict the use of the veto, Kazakhstan among them. We believe that that the use of the veto, like that of any other powerful instrument, should be constrained. It should be exercised only when the question is of vital importance to the United Nations as a whole. Every effort should be made to arrive at a consensus decision in the Working Group so that the veto need not be used.

During the recent discussion of the report of the Security Council, my delegation welcomed the efforts of the Council to promote its openness. While recognizing some progress in this field, we call for more transparency in the Council's work. We believe that its working methods could be improved by holding more frequent interactive discussions between the Council and non-Council members, as well as open meetings and briefings with the participation of the Secretary-General, his special representatives and the United Nations Secretariat.

My delegation also commented on the report of the Security Council itself. We noted that its discussion did not attract much attention from delegations because it lacked an analytical component. We expect the Secretariat to present an analytical and informative report of the Security Council, so as to make our future discussions more fruitful and meaningful.

The recent terrorist attacks on the United States of America presented an unprecedented challenge to the international community and forced it to consider the issue of international terrorism as one of its priorities. The Security Council is now entrusted with a central role in the elaboration of a global strategy against international terrorism. Today more than ever, we should pursue our common goal of having a strong body — one that is effective, representative and transparent — to maintain international peace and security and to respond adequately to the new challenges that have emerged.

We believe that the completion of the process of Security Council reform will enable the Council to cope with its expanding responsibilities more effectively and to resolve the serious regional and global problems that exist, including the successful settlement of the Afghan crisis.

We believe that a compromise solution on the reform package as a whole can be achieved only through mutual trust and positive cooperation. In this regard, Kazakhstan will continue to be engaged actively and constructively in this endeavour.

**Mr. Mmualefe** (Botswana): Allow me at the outset to congratulate Cameroon, Guinea, the Syrian Arab Republic, Bulgaria and Mexico on their recent election to five non-permanent seats on the Security

Council for a two-year term commencing on 1 January 2002. It is our fervent hope that these members will continue to champion the cause of the item under consideration, namely, equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters.

Allow me also to congratulate the President of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, Mr. Harri Holkeri, and his Vice-Chairmen, the Permanent Representatives of Iceland and Sri Lanka, for coordinating the work of the Open-ended Working Group that produced this report (A/55/47).

As frustrating as it is that, eight years since the adoption of resolution 48/26, on 3 December 1993, little substantive progress has yet been made towards its final implementation, our resolve to see this process through to its natural conclusion remains undiminished. After all, the issues at hand are central to the very success of our Organization, its effectiveness and ultimate existence.

The goals are unambiguous, necessary and inevitable. The need to increase the membership of the Security Council to reflect the realities of today's adjusted balance of power cannot be overemphasized. My delegation fully aligns itself with the position adopted by the African Group on the extent of the expansion required for both categories of membership, permanent and non-permanent.

We continue to call for a limit on the use of the veto and its eventual elimination, as it has outlived its usefulness.

Equally important is the need to reform the working methods of the Security Council in a way that will make its operations transparent and allow for wider participation of the United Nations membership in its activities. We note here the progress that has been achieved to date, but are of the view that much still needs to be done even in institutionalizing what has so far been agreed.

We believe that it is incumbent on the peoples of the United Nations to stand up for the democratization of our body. We cannot continue to be held to ransom by the will of a minority at the expense of the majority. This is not a time to deny the citizens of the world a voice. If we are to claim to be defending the ideals of peace, prosperity and fundamental freedoms for all, then we shall be failing in our mandate if we curtail the very processes which promise to transform those ideals into reality.

Many of us in the developing world recognize that the realization of a peaceful continent relies to a significant degree on our ability to relieve the burden of social and economic deprivation suffered by our vast populace. Many have pointed out the failure of the Security Council to demonstrate a sympathy for us in our particular brand of instability, born to a large degree of social ills. We continue to stress the importance of coordinating the work of the Council with that of the Economic and Social Council to make sure that the root causes of conflict are adequately addressed, with long-lasting results.

The African continent, together with other equally deserving regions, only demands its democratic right to proper representation. We cannot and will not allow our interests to remain subordinate to those of major Powers. There would be no greater demonstration of the permanent membership's sincerity about the stated goals of engaging our interests constructively than the simple acknowledgement of our existence and rightful claim to this representation.

The insistence on limited expansion is a veiled attempt to continue to subordinate the perceived injustices of the global system and retain the Council as a hub for the privileged few. Excuses of possible ineffectiveness only contribute to the perception that we are unable to govern sensibly and act decisively. It is our contention that we are no less, and equally, no more capable than those currently deciding our fate. The very premise on which this Organization was created was that of inclusion, not exclusion.

I reiterate that our agitation for real and meaningful reform is unshakeable. Cluster I and II issues must be considered in tandem; they are mutually inclusive and therefore must be considered as parts of a whole. The improvement of working methods alone in the Security Council does not provide the entire answer to the problem at hand. Let us indeed recall the Millennium Declaration of 8 September 2000, in which our heads of State and Government committed themselves to "intensify our efforts to achieve a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects" (*resolution 55/21, para. 30*). There is no ambiguity in that.

**Mr. Bakhit** (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like at the outset to express our gratitude to the former President of the General Assembly, Mr. Holkeri, for his leadership of our efforts to reform the Security Council. I also extend my gratitude to the Ambassadors of Sri Lanka and Iceland for their efforts in preparing

the comprehensive report before the General Assembly on the reform of the Security Council.

It is regrettable that the General Assembly is meeting today for the eighth consecutive year to consider the reform of the Security Council, a matter to which we attach great importance because of the important role that the Council plays in maintaining international peace and security.

Member States are trying to make the Council more democratic and more representative of the wider membership of the Organization, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. Our leaders expressed their interest in the reform of the Security Council in the Millennium Declaration, which calls for us to intensify our efforts to effect a comprehensive reform of the Security Council — a responsibility we should fulfil.

My delegation has expressed its position on Council reform in its active participation in the work of the Open-ended Working Group, through the statement of the President of Sudan at the Millennium Summit and through the statements of the Foreign Minister during recent sessions of the General Assembly. It is a position fully in line with that of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement on the importance of reforming the Council in its two categories of members — permanent and non-permanent — within the framework of equitable geographic representation. This reform would make the Council more representative of the wider membership of the United Nations, improve its working methods and make the Council's decision-making more democratic and more transparent.

I will not reiterate this position in detail here, but I affirm once more that it is important to consider Council reform and the expansion of its membership as an integral part of a whole, comprehensive package. Sudan supports the African position, which calls for two non-permanent seats to be allocated according to the principle of rotation followed by the Organization of African Unity. Africa requires particular consideration regarding Council membership by taking into account the types of conflict Africa is experiencing. Most of the Security Council agenda relates to Africa. This requires intensive African representation in the Security Council, especially among permanent and non-permanent members. This will strengthen the Council's ability to deal with African conflicts and find valid solutions to them.

As for the right of veto, my delegation renews its position, the position of the Non-Aligned Movement, calling for abolition of the veto. That could be done gradually, starting by restricting that right, which some permanent members use in the Security Council for their narrow national interests, without taking into consideration the wider United Nations membership, on whose behalf the Security Council acts.

In conclusion, we wish to point out that we have been following up the work of the Security Council and thus we appreciate its efforts to reform its working methods and promote transparency. We also appreciate its efforts in responding to our plea to end the embargo against our country, the participation of some permanent members of the Security Council in the work of the Open-ended Working Group and many of the views presented during the work of the Open-ended Working Group on reforming the working methods of the Security Council, as they represent the majority views of the membership on increasing its transparency, reforming its working methods and being able to face the threats to international peace and security.

**Mr. Jacob** (Israel): The State of Israel supports the initiative to reform the Security Council. It is our belief that more equitable representation and greater transparency in the work of the Council can only serve to increase its credibility and effectiveness.

Since the founding of the United Nations in 1945, and even more so since the last expansion of the Security Council in 1965, the world has changed drastically. In the last 36 years more than 70 new Member States have been admitted to the United Nations. The end of the cold war, the trend towards democracy, the sweeping tide of globalization, the rise of new economic Powers — all these and more have combined to profoundly alter the shape of our world and the ways in which nations relate to one another. The scourge of terrorism, whose deadly intentions were horrifically demonstrated on 11 September, poses yet another urgent challenge to the international community. The Security Council must adapt itself to faithfully reflect these new geopolitical and economic realities. At the same time, the Council's effectiveness must be maintained.

Israel supports the initiative to increase membership in the Council to reflect the increased membership of the United Nations as a whole and more faithfully represent the broad array of interests of Member States. We must, however, endeavour to strike

a balance between the need to ensure that the Council faithfully embodies the larger will of the Organization and the need to maintain the Council's capacity to fulfil its responsibilities under the Charter.

Israel further supports the initiatives to provide the membership of the Organization with improved access to the Council's proceedings. Meetings should be conducted in an open format whenever possible and steps should be taken to ensure that reliable information is made available to Member States. Greater transparency will serve to reinforce confidence in the Council not only within the United Nations, but in the world beyond.

As we consider measures to improve the functioning of the Security Council, we must remain cognizant of our ultimate goal of increased efficiency and effectiveness. We must further take care to ensure that any change reflects general agreement among Member States.

With regard to the issue of equitable representation, I would like at this point to take note of the fact that Israel is now a full, though temporary, member of the Western European and other States Group. Inclusion in the Group has helped to rectify an anomaly that affects no other Member State, and is an important step, albeit a first step, towards Israel's full integration into the United Nations. This process, however, is still in its infancy. To fully realize the principle of sovereign equality, as laid down in Article 2 of the Charter, Israel's acceptance in a regional grouping must be extended to all United Nations headquarters around the world, as well as to all specialized agencies and international bodies and organs created by international instruments. Israel must also become eligible for the same candidatures as are all other United Nations members. Until that time, Israel's status within the Organization will remain unequal, a fact which should be of concern to all Member States.

It should also be noted that, while we appreciate inclusion in the Group, we remain committed to achieving membership with our natural partners in the Asian Group. In lieu of this membership, however, our inclusion in the Western European and other States Group will serve to increase our ability to participate as a full and equal Member State. The Secretary-General's efforts in this metamorphosis were, and will continue to be, crucial to its success.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that the Council's credibility and effectiveness rest in its capacity to embody the broadest range of culture and opinion and in its fidelity to the principle of equality that forms the basis of the United Nations.

**Mr. Fruchtbaum** (Grenada): On numerous occasions in the Open-ended Working Group my delegation has argued that a satisfactory reform of the Security Council is not achievable without a thorough knowledge of how the Council does its work. To acquire this knowledge, we proposed that the Working Group receive briefings as well as detailed written materials about the functioning of this vital organ of the United Nations system. For those Member States that have never served on the Council, or have not done so for a number of years, information of this kind, it seemed to us, was essential for a fruitful consideration of Council reform. The Ambassadors of two countries — Colombia and Singapore, now serving on the Council — have spoken frankly, as have others, about the problem of learning how that body operates.

The one briefing the Working Group did receive is described in paragraph 32 of the report now before us. My delegation thanks President Harri Holkeri of Finland and the Vice-Chairmen of the Working Group, Ambassador Thorsteinn Ingólfsson of Iceland and Ambassador John de Saram of Sri Lanka, for making that briefing possible. From it we learned, inter alia, about the note-keeping practices for the all-important informal consultations of the whole and the existence of these notes. Their value for future historical, legal and other research is potentially very high, yet it is unclear at this time that they are destined for preservation in the archives of the United Nations. How useful these notes, which are not available to members of the Security Council, could be for the ongoing work of the Council needs to be considered. My delegation believes that if the Open-ended Working Group is to bring its efforts to a successful conclusion, it must begin as soon as feasible to arrange for the preparation of the necessary analytical and briefing materials about the work and procedures of the Security Council.

**The Acting President**: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 49.

*The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.*